BATMAN
DETECTIVE COMICS
706
FEB 97
DIXON
NOLAN
ROACH
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NOLAN
KESEL
1996

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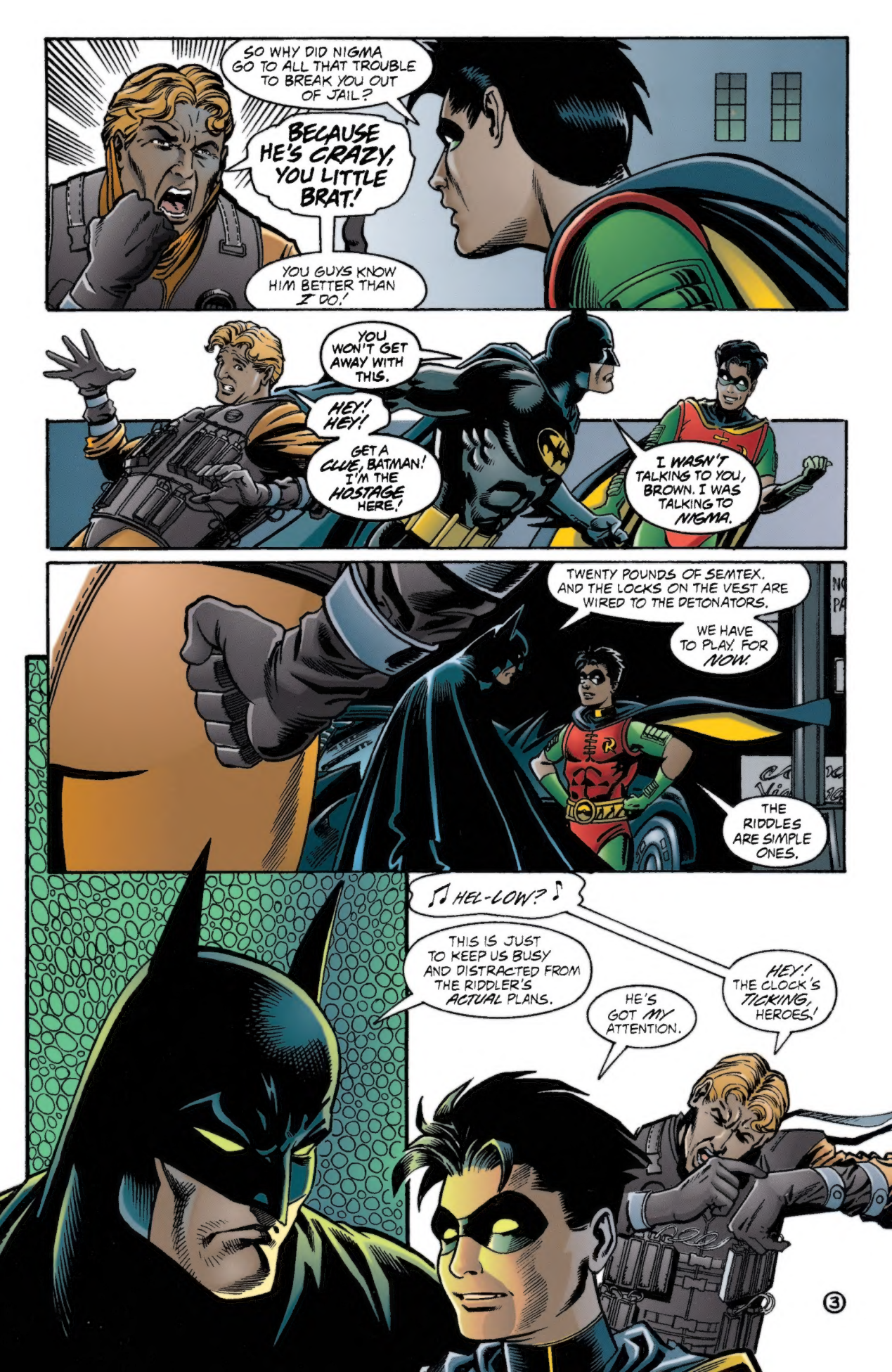
HERE'S YOUR POSERS, BATMAN:
OLD TESTAMENT OPENING LINE.
A STITCH IN TIME.
TEN LESS ONE.
TRUE MUSKETEERS.
LITTLE PEPPERS.

YOU HAVE FIFTEEN MINUTES, FRIENDS.
TO SOLVE THE RIDDLES, TO GET THE CLUE TO YOUR NEXT STATION.
FIFTEEN MINUTES OR--
--CLUEMASTER LEAVES A SMOKING HOLE IN THE STREET.
HE'S NUTS!
HOW DO I KNOW THE TWO OF YOU AREN'T WORKING TOGETHER?
I'M NOT! WE'RE NOT!
HE HATES ME!
SOUP
2

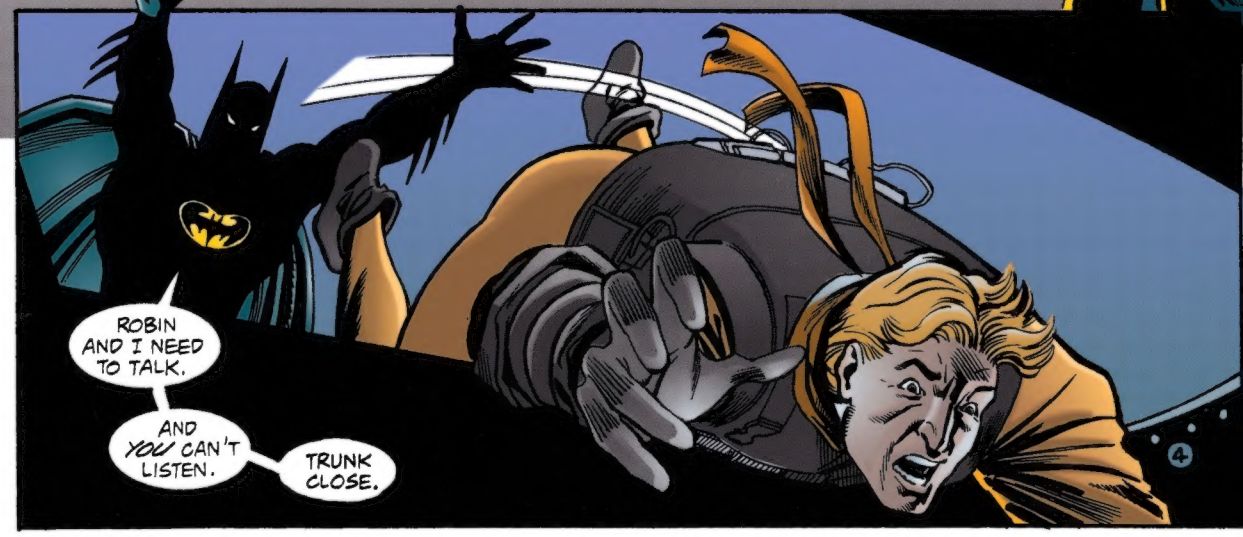

SO WHY DID NIGMA GO TO ALL THAT TROUBLE TO BREAK YOU OUT OF JAIL?
BECAUSE HE'S CRAZY, YOU LITTLE BRAT!
YOU GUYS KNOW HIM BETTER THAN I DO!
YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS.
HEY! HEY!
GET A CLUE, BATMAN! I'M THE HOSTAGE HERE!
I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU, BROWN. I WAS TALKING TO NIGMA.
TWENTY POUNDS OF SEMTEX. AND THE LOCKS ON THE VEST ARE WIRED TO THE DETONATORS.
WE HAVE TO PLAY FOR NOW.
THE RIDDLES ARE SIMPLE ONES.
♫ HEL-LOW? ♪
THIS IS JUST TO KEEP US BUSY AND DISTRACTED FROM THE RIDDLER'S ACTUAL PLANS.
HE'S GOT MY ATTENTION.
HEY! THE CLOCK'S TICKING, HEROES!

THE ANSWERS ARE ALL NUMBERS.
1:1. NINE.
NINE AGAIN.
AND THERE WERE FOUR MUSKETEERS.
AND FIVE LITTLE PEPPERS.

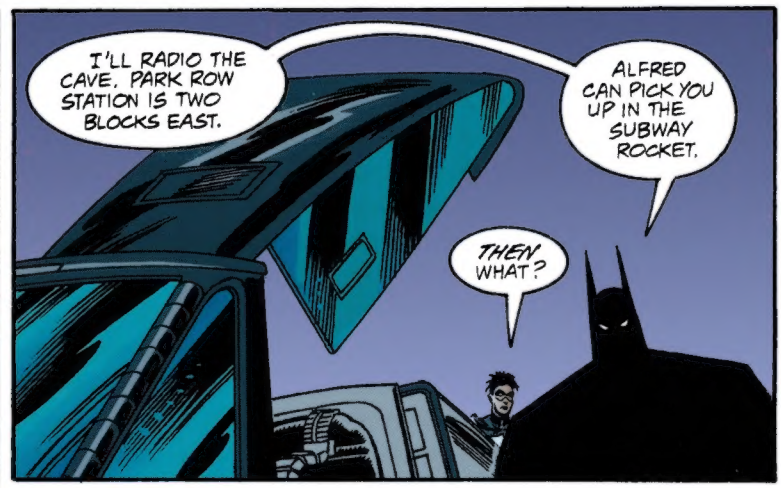
THOSE WERE THE EASY ONES. THEY GET HARDER FROM HERE.
YOU HAVE FIFTEEN MINUTES TO MAKE YOUR NEXT STOP.
"WHERE THE PARADING OF THE GREEN BEGINS."

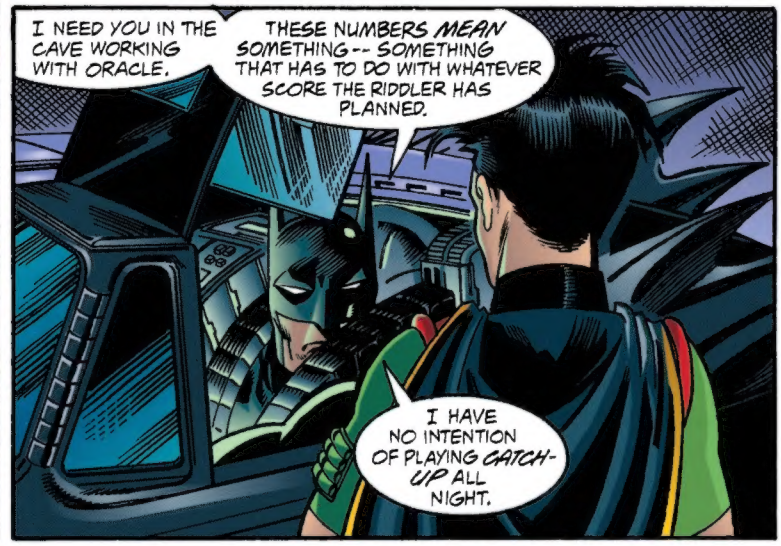
THE CLOCK'S STARTED AGAIN.
LOOK, YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME, BATMAN.
I'M TRYING, BROWN.

SO I GET TO RIDE IN YOUR BAD CAR?
TRUNK?
TRUNK OPEN.


ROBIN AND I NEED TO TALK.
AND YOU CAN'T LISTEN.
TRUNK CLOSE.

THE BAT'S CHASING HIS TAIL AND GOTHAM IS OURS.
QUERY, ECHO. THE GAME IS AFOOT!
HAUL


I'LL RADIO THE CAVE. PARK ROW STATION IS TWO BLOCKS EAST.
ALFRED CAN PICK YOU UP IN THE SUBWAY ROCKET.
THEN WHAT?


I NEED YOU IN THE CAVE WORKING WITH ORACLE.
THESE NUMBERS MEAN SOMETHING -- SOMETHING THAT HAS TO DO WITH WHATEVER SCORE THE RIDDLER HAS PLANNED.
I HAVE NO INTENTION OF PLAYING CATCH-UP ALL NIGHT.

GET ORACLE ON LINE AND STAY IN TOUCH.
SHUH-SURE.

Whoa.
BEER
SORRY WE'RE CLOSED
SALE
SPORTS YANKS

IS THIS SUPPOSED TO HUMILIATE ME?

IT'S NOT WORKING, BATSY!

SOUNDING STRESSED, CLUEMASTER.

WUP?

THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE FUN.

LOOK, RIDDLER--WE'RE ON THE SAME SIDE.

I CAN BE MORE THAN JUST A DECOY.

YOU'RE A WANNABE, CLUESIE.

I'M GOTHAM'S KING OF CONUNDRUMS.

YOU'RE AN EMBARRASSMENT.

PLEASE...

CAN'T WE JUST GET ALONG?

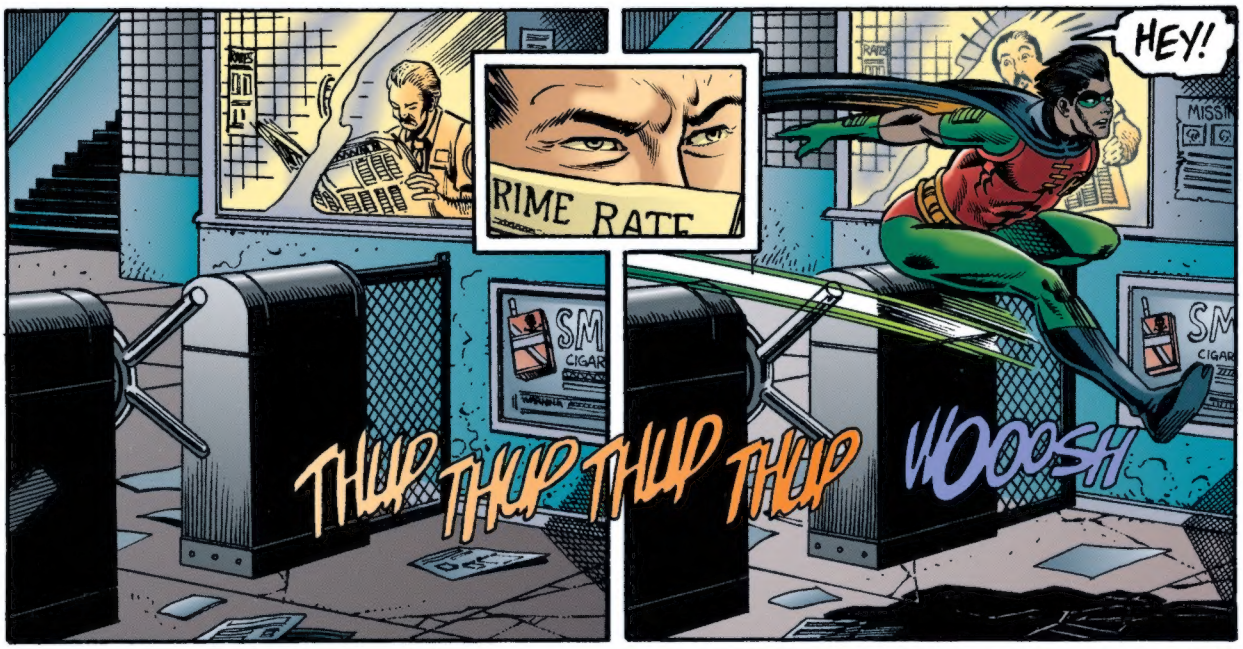
YOU'RE WHINING, ARTIE.

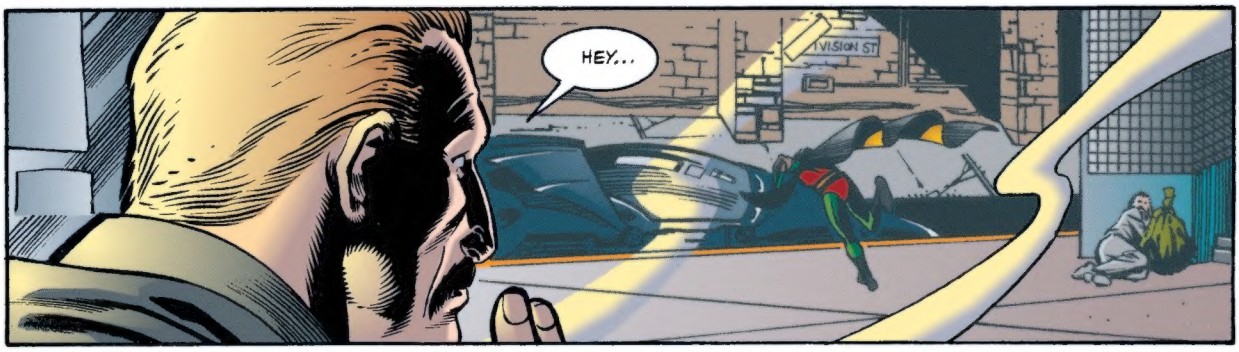
I LOVE IT.

NIGMA, YOU SON OF A-

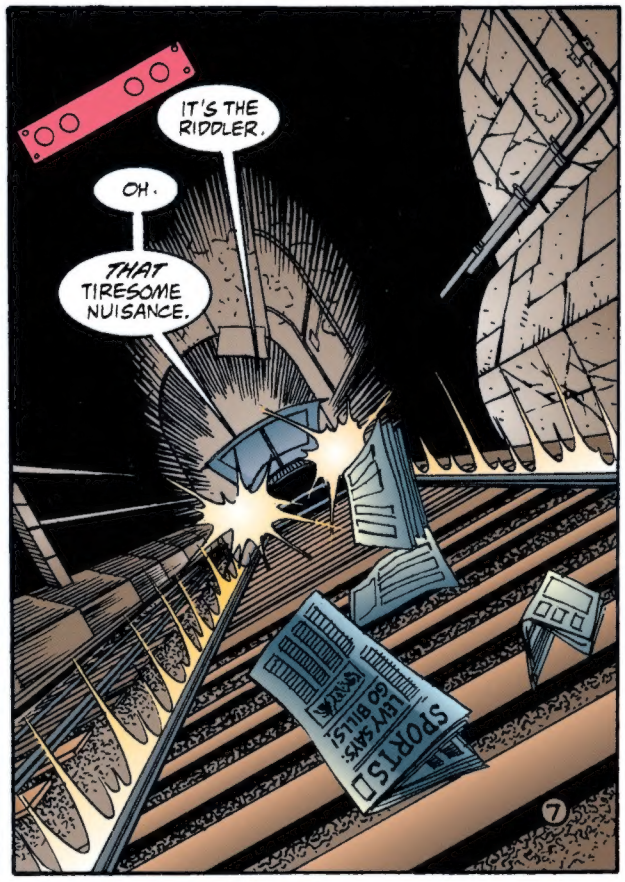
WHAT'S BLACK AND ORANGE AND RED ALL OVER?

YOU AND THE BAT WHEN I BLAST YOU TO GOO!

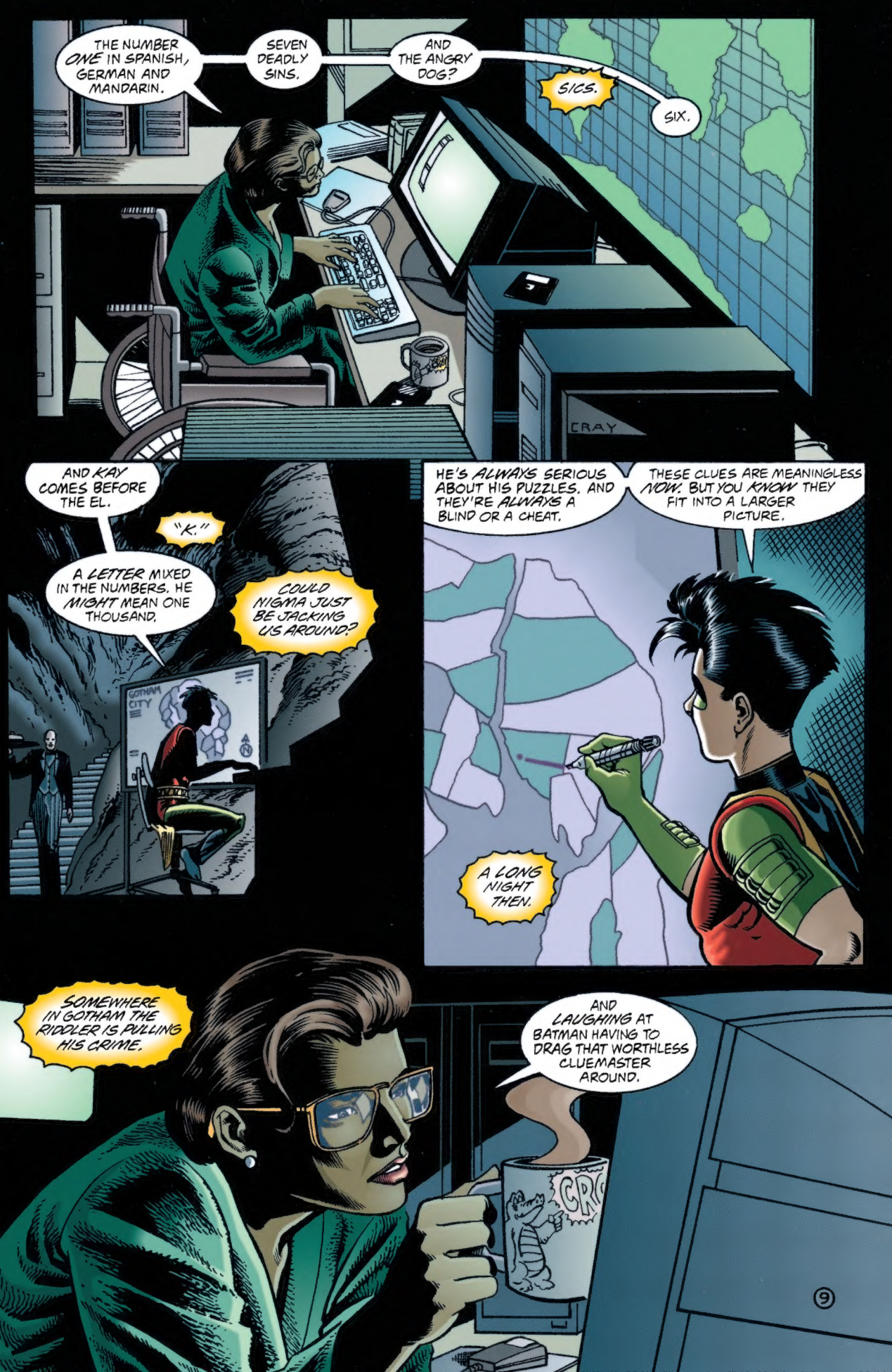

RIME RATE
HEY!
THUP THUP THUP THUP WOOSH


HEY...
VISION ST

THERE'S A TURNAROUND JUST BEFORE VICTORIA STATION.
I SUPPOSE THIS SITUATION WAS TOO *URGENT* FOR ME TO USE THE MINIVAN?
WAY TOO URGENT.

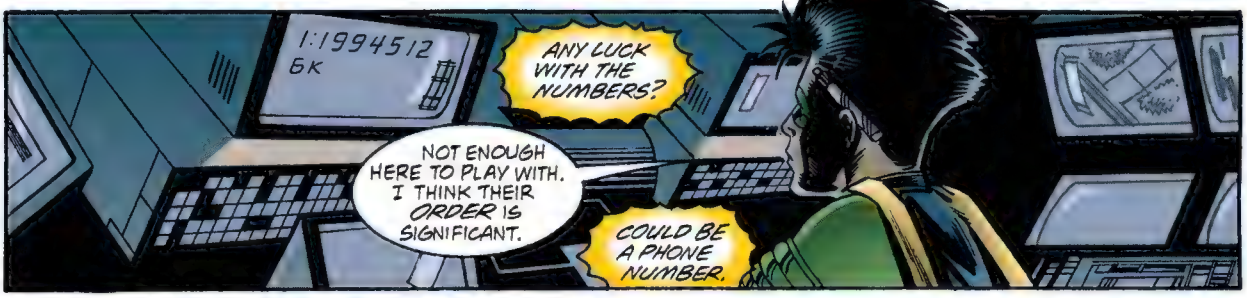

IT'S THE RIDDLER.
OH.
THAT TIRESOME NUISANCE.
SPORTS
LEW SAYS: GO BILLS!

WE'RE HERE, BROWN.
YOU FIGURED THE LOCATION THAT FAST?
I ALWAYS CAUGHT YOU, DIDN'T I?
THIS IS WHERE THE CITY'S ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE BEGINS.
AT THE IRISH CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL IN EAST RIVER.
SO HOW'S NIGMA EVEN KNOW WE GOT HERE?
I HAVE A GLOBAL POSITIONING BEACON WIRED INTO YOUR BOOM-BOOM VEST.
OH.
UNO. EIN. YI.
DEADLY SINS.
WHAT THE ANGRY DOG DOES.
SHE COMES BEFORE THE EL.

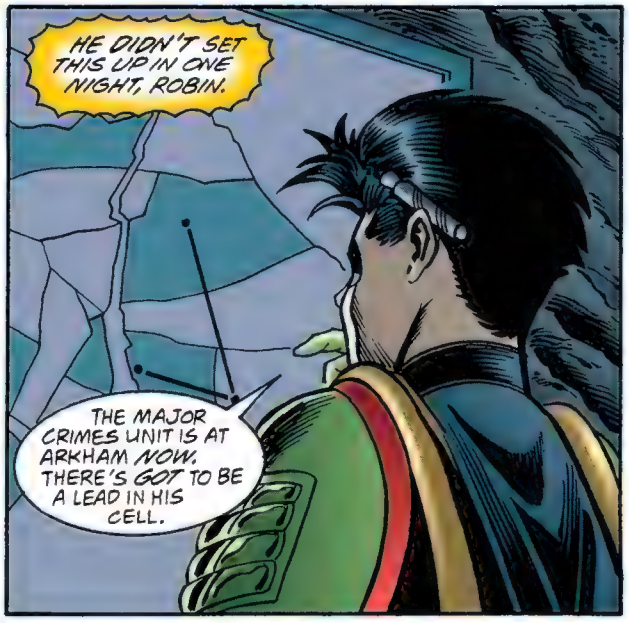

THE NUMBER ONE IN SPANISH, GERMAN AND MANDARIN.
SEVEN DEADLY SINS.
AND THE ANGRY DOG?
SICS.
SIX.
CRAY
AND KAY COMES BEFORE THE EL.
"K."
A LETTER MIXED IN THE NUMBERS. HE MIGHT MEAN ONE THOUSAND.
COULD NIGMA JUST BE JACKING US AROUND?
GOTHAM CITY
HE'S ALWAYS SERIOUS ABOUT HIS PUZZLES, AND THEY'RE ALWAYS A BLIND OR A CHEAT.
THESE CLUES ARE MEANINGLESS NOW. BUT YOU KNOW THEY FIT INTO A LARGER PICTURE.
A LONG NIGHT THEN.
SOMEWHERE IN GOTHAM THE RIDDLER IS PULLING HIS CRIME.
AND LAUGHING AT BATMAN HAVING TO DRAG THAT WORTHLESS CLUEMASTER AROUND.
9

I'M NOT GETTING IN THE TRUNK. I DON'T SEE WHY I CAN'T RIDE UP FRONT.
BECAUSE I SAID YOU CAN'T.
NOT ME, BABY.
SUIT YOURSELF.
I HOPE YOU ENJOY THE NEXT TWELVE MINUTES.
HM!
SLAM
BRAAAAAM
SCREED!
HM?
WAIT!
WAIT!

"THE FIRST DAUGHTER LOOKS AT THE STARS."
LAME-OH.
HE MEANS THE PLANETARIUM OVER IN CHELSEA.


1:1994512
6K
ANY LUCK WITH THE NUMBERS?
NOT ENOUGH HERE TO PLAY WITH. I THINK THEIR ORDER IS SIGNIFICANT.
COULD BE A PHONE NUMBER.

TRIED IT. IT'S NOT IN SERVICE.
HIS CELLULAR SIGNAL?
TRACED IT. HE'S GOT IT ROUTED THROUGH ONTARIO AND SYDNEY.
I HATE THIS GUY.


HE DIDN'T SET THIS UP IN ONE NIGHT, ROBIN.
THE MAJOR CRIMES UNIT IS AT ARKHAM NOW. THERE'S GOT TO BE A LEAD IN HIS CELL.

"HE COULDN'T HAVE KEPT ANYTHING THIS COMPLEX IN HIS HEAD."
I GOT SOMETHING.

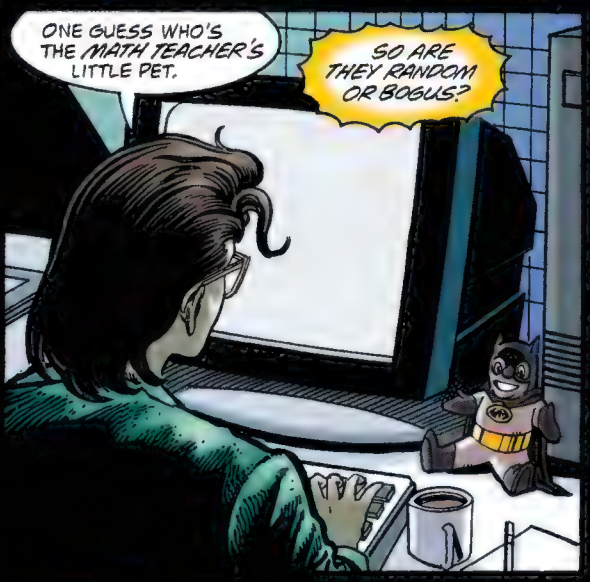
SOME KINDA NOTEBOOK, COMMISSIONER.
GOOD WORK, SERGEANT BULLOCK.

IT'S JUST ROWS OF NUMBERS.
SCREWY.
DO YOU HAVE A FAX MACHINE?
IN THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE.
TWO MINUTES, GUYS. HERE'S THE POINTERS:
THIS LETTER'S *BESIDE* ITSELF.
AN INDIVIDUAL IN THE HIVE.
WONDERS OF THE WORLD.
MOPTOPS.
"W" IS BESIDE ITSELF.
ONE BEE IS AN INDIVIDUAL IN THE HIVE.
SEVEN WONDERS, FOUR MOPTOPS.
YOU BOYS ARE GOOOOOD.
YOU SHOULD MAKE THIS PARTNERSHIP *PERMANENT*.
THE NEXT LOCATION, NIGMA.
JULIUS THROUGH DOMITIAN. A NO-BRAINER.
12

IT'LL FALL INTO PLACE. BUT WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT HAPPENS AHEAD OF NIGMA'S SCHEDULE.
THE RIDDLER'S NOT THAT CLEVER.
THE FORUM OF THE TWELVE CAESARS IN MIDTOWN.
ALREADY ON MY WAY.
A RIDDLE IS JUST CONCEALING COMMON KNOWLEDGE.
HE KNOWS AND WE HAVE TO FIND OUT.
EXACTLY.
WELL, COMMISSIONER GORDON'S FAXING ME SOMETHING THAT MAY GIVE US A JUMP ON THIS GAME.
I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
THESE ARE ALL EASY. AND THAT WORRIES ME.
WHAT IS THIS STUFF?
FROM A NOTEBOOK FOUND IN NIGMA'S CELL.
MORE NUMBERS.
SOME LETTERS.
AND OUR NEXT STEP IS?
I'M RUNNING THEM AGAINST BENFORD'S LAW.

IT'S AN AXIOM THAT LAYS OUT THE STATISTICAL FREQUENCY THAT ONE THROUGH NINE APPEAR IN ANY RANDOM SET OF NUMBERS.
YOU LOST ME, I'M AFRAID.

AUDITORS USE IT TO FIGURE IF SETS OF NUMBERS ARE REALLY RANDOM OR MADE UP.
THE LAW UNCOVERS CHECK FRAUD, DOUBLE BOOKKEEPING AND TAX CHEATS.


ONE GUESS WHO'S THE MATH TEACHER'S LITTLE PET.
SO ARE THEY RANDOM OR BOGUS?

ZERO NEVER APPEARS ONCE. NOT IN FORTY PAGES OF CRAMPED NUMBERS.
NUMBER ONE APPEARS TOO OFTEN FOLLOWED BY NUMBER TWO.

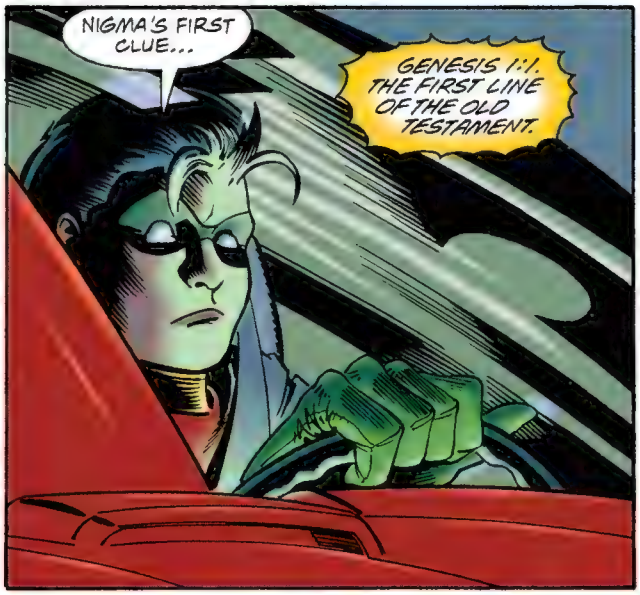
BUT THERE COULD STILL BE A RANDOM PATTERN. IF ONLY WE KNEW WHAT IT APPLIED TO.
AND WHAT'S WITH "K", "W", "E" AND "ONE B"?

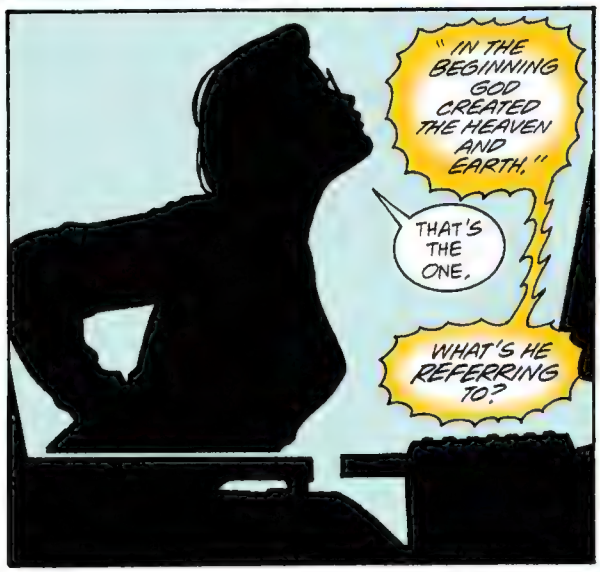
AND THE ORDER IS SIGNIFICANT.
MY BRAIN HURTS.

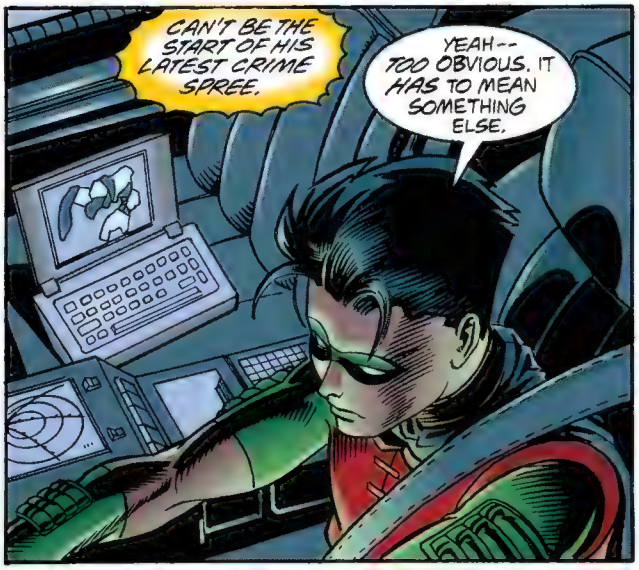
HAMLET CHOOSES LIFE.
THE LONELIEST NUMBER.
THE SECOND PRIME NUMBER.
WHAT I SEE BETWEEN ARE AND TEA.
"TO BE."
"ONE." "THREE."
AND "I SEE ESS"
I SEE I UNDER-ESTIMATED YOU GUYS.
THIS ONE'S A BIT OF A DRIVE.
WHERE ROBIN AND MARIAN STOMPED AROUND. SOME ABOVE AND UNDER GROUND.
MOVE IT, BROWN!
BUT I'M TIRED...
THE NEXT STOP IS SHERWOOD GROTTO IN BRISTOL COMMONS. THAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HARBOR.
COMING!

ROBIN, ARE YOU PREPARED TO GO MOBILE AND STAY IN TOUCH WITH ORACLE?
ALL SET.
I'M HEADING FOR LOCATION FIVE.
IT'LL BE A CLOSE ONE. AND I HAVE SOME IDEAS FOR A WAY TO CHANGE THE RULES A LITTLE.
ON MY WAY!
SOMETHING TO SUSTAIN YOU YOUNG MASTER!
ICE BOX
THANKS, ALFRED! THROW IT IN THE REDBIRD!
YOU GOTTA LOVE THESE GUYS...

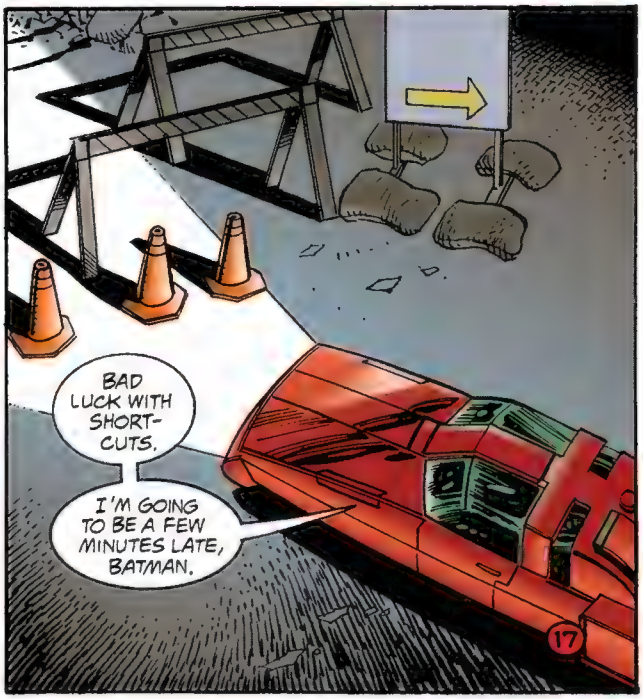
YOU STILL WITH ME, ORACLE?
ON THE AIR AND EVERY-WHERE.


NIGMA'S FIRST CLUE...
GENESIS 1:1. THE FIRST LINE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.


"IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVEN AND EARTH."
THAT'S THE ONE.
WHAT'S HE REFERRING TO?


CAN'T BE THE START OF HIS LATEST CRIME SPREE.
YEAH-- TOO OBVIOUS. IT HAS TO MEAN SOMETHING ELSE.

MAYBE THE CHAPTER AND VERSE? TWO NUMBER ONES?
AW NO..
YOU HAVE SOME-THING?
YEAH..
HOLY


BAD LUCK WITH SHORT-CUTS.
I'M GOING TO BE A FEW MINUTES LATE, BATMAN.

YOU LISTENING, NIGMA?
ALL EARS, CLUE-BOY.
LOOK, WE SHOULD BE TOGETHER ON THIS, MAN.
OH, YOU'RE DOING YOUR PART.
THISE UP
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING. I'VE BEEN WHERE YOU ARE.
THINGS SEEM TO BE GOING ALONG FINE AND--
WHAM! THE BAT DROPS ON YOU!
hee hee!
GIRLS...
WHEN IT GETS TO THAT POINT, AND IT WILL...
I'M THERE FOR YOU.
I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND, "PAL".
HOW DO WE LOOK, EDDIE?
GOTTA GO, CLUESIE
NIGMA!
VERY FETCHING, LADIES...
SURE.

YOU READY, BENNY?
YOU SEE A HOLE DUG HERE YET, MOMO?
IT'S JUST I'M NERVOUS, BENNY.
WORRYIN' LIKE A LITTLE GIRL. NOBODY COMES HERE THIS LATE.
THIS IS BRISTOL, NOT SOME GOTHAM JUNKIE PARK.
GONNA BE HOURS BEFORE SOME JOGGIN' RICH CHICK COMES THROUGH HERE. LITTLE JIMMY'LL BE PLANTED BY THEN.
NOW PICK UP A SHOVEL AN'--
Whuh?

LIGHTS OFF.
TRUNK OPEN.
... CAN'T SEE...
GET UNDER COVER, BROWN.
YEAH! YEAH!
I DON'T THINK THIS IS *PART* OF THE RIDDLER'S PLAN.
WHO'S THUH-THIS GUY?
HE'S A *DEAD* MAN!

huh!
huh!
huh!
WOO!
BROWN!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WE SURPRISED SOME HOODS AND BATMAN--
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
HUH-HUH-HIDING?
HIDING?
GET IN THERE AND HELP HIM!
HUH?
YOU HEARD ME!

AGHK!
CHECK THIS OUT, NIGMA--
ONE STRAY ROUND IN MY DIRECTION AND--BLAM!
YEAH!
YEAH!
YEAH!
YOU DON'T HELP HIM AND IT'S BLAM FOR SURE!
HE'S PART OF THE PLAN! YOU'RE JUST A TOOL!
UNNH!
GET IN THERE AND PITCH OR I PUSH A BUTTON WITH YOUR NAME ON IT!
ULP!
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE